

U.S. Patent No. 6,023,683 - Claim 6

U.S. Patent No. 6,023,683: Claim 6

6. An electronic sourcing system comprising:
 - (A) a database containing data relating to items associated with at least two sources;
 - (B) means for searching for matching items in the database;
 - (C) means for building a requisition using data relating to selected matching items and their associated source(s);
 - (D) means for processing the requisition to generate one or more purchase orders for the selected matching items; and
 - (E) means for converting data relating to a selected matching item and an associated source to data relating to an item and a different source.

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database**Function:** searching for matching items in the database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
a computer which is programmed with special-purpose software modules including a search engine module to execute an algorithm which includes the steps of		
(1) receiving search criteria (e.g., catalog number, part number, partial textual description) relating to items(s) to be searched;	'683 Patent, Col. 5: 18-39	<p>A typical data exchange may begin with requisition/purchasing system 40 (which, in the illustrated embodiment, is the Fisher RIMS system) requesting information from catalog database 36 via search program 50. Once a search by search program 50 has been completed, the selected information will be communicated to requisition/purchasing system 40 via interface 60.</p> <p>Alternatively, if the search of catalog database 36 is initiated from search program 50, the information selected from the search is returned to requisition/procurement system 40 via interface 60.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 5:66-Col. 6: 13	The data passed by interface 60 preferably comprise all or a subset of the following twelve fields: vendor name, vendor number, vendor part (catalog) number, product description, bid price, list price, keyword, page number, quantity, unit, catalog text, and catalog images. Because of the amount of data for catalog images present in database 36 and viewed on monitor 22, these data are usually not passed via interface 60. Any of the above-listed fields may be filled by requisition/purchasing system 40 prior to requesting a search

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		of catalog database 36 by search program 50. However, requisition/purchasing system 40 is not required to pass any data to search program 50. If a field is not passed, that field will be filled with spaces. The fields that are filled with data will assist search program 50 in executing its first search against a specific catalog contained in catalog database 36.
	'683 Patent, Col. 7:61-Col. 8:32	The user can next enter desired items and quantities for the requisition. Each desired item may be identified by entering its distributor catalog or part number, if known, in the field below the STOCK NBR label on the appropriate line in Requisition Item Table 46 shown on Requisition management data screen 110. In the sample Requisition Management data screen 110 shown in Appendix II, the part number 13246818F has been entered in the STOCK NBR field of Line 001. Once the user has entered such information at least partially describing a desired item on Requisition Management data screen 110, he or she may wish to initiate a search of catalog database 36 to find all the part numbers contained in catalog database 36 that match the part number entered or other information on Requisition Management screen 110. If so, the user enters the letter "S" (for "Select") on the line number of the item that he or she wishes to search in catalog database 36. The letter "S" has been entered to the left of line 001 on the sample Requisition Management data screen 110 shown in Appendix II. Any number of items, or no items, listed on Requisition Management data screen 110 may be

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Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>marked with "S."</p> <p>A user may not always have information relating to the catalog or part number for the particular items that are to be requisitioned using Fisher RIMS system 40. Or, the user may have relevant information about an item from a particular vendor but may wish to locate information about the same or a similar product available from other vendors. Or, the user may simply know the name of the item that he or she wishes to requisition. In any of these cases, the user alternatively or additionally could enter text at least partially describing the product to be requisitioned in the "DESC" field of Requisition Management data screen 110 (e.g., Appendix II). Then, the user would initiate the electronic sourcing system 5 of the present invention to search the vendor product catalogs contained in catalog database 36. Alternatively, the user could initiate search program 50 of electronic sourcing system 5 without having first entered information in RIMS system 40 about the product to be requisitioned.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 12:4-29	<p>If the user desires to do additional searching in catalog database 36 that is not connected to catalog or other items that have been listed on Requisition Management data screen 110 of Fisher RIMS system 40, he or she can click the box on footer bar of Shell 52 that is labelled "Search." Then, a Search screen comes up on monitor 22 of local computer 20. An exemplary Search screen is shown in Appendix VII.</p>

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>In this screen, the usual footer bar is visible in the background, but is not active.</p> <p>Using the Search screen, a user can search catalog database 36 by page, text description, part number (where the user has the further option to search by Fisher part number, for example if Fisher is to be the desired vendor), Vendor part number, vendor name (for vendors other than Fisher), or bulletin. Stock numbers specific to the customer can also be present in catalog database 36 and searched using the screen of Appendix VII. "Bulletin" refers to an additional vendor publication with detailed product information that may not be included in a vendor catalog. Searching for information contained in bulletins may be done by bulletin number, but only if bulletins have been made a part of catalog database 36. For purposes of this disclosure, bulletins when included in a catalog database are considered a type of catalog.</p> <p>After the user has entered the field to be searched on the Search Screen, the user clicks on the "SEARCH" box near the bottom of the Search Screen. A Hit List 47 indicating all items from catalog database 36 that match the search field that was entered on the Search Screen then is generated.</p>

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>program 50. Interface 60 is preferably based upon the dynamic data exchange ("DDE") protocol provided by OS/2 operating system 32. As shown in FIG. 2, interface 60 preferably includes three linking programs to interface requisition/purchasing system 40 and search program 50: ESRC program 70, ESCP program 80 and DDE LINK 90.</p> <p>A typical data exchange may begin with requisition/purchasing system 40 (which, in the illustrated embodiment, is the Fisher RIMS system) requesting information from catalog database 36 via search program 50.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 5:66 to Col. 6:13	<p>The data passed by interface 60 preferably comprise all or a subset of the following twelve fields: vendor name, vendor number, vendor part (catalog) number, product description, bid price, list price, keyword, page number, quantity, unit, catalog text, and catalog images. Because of the amount of data for catalog images present in database 36 and viewed on monitor 22, these data are usually not passed via interface 60. Any of the above-listed fields may be filled by requisition/purchasing system 40 prior to requesting a search of catalog database 36 by search program 50. However, requisition/purchasing system 40 is not required to pass any data to search program 50. If a field is not passed, that field will be filled with spaces. The fields that are filled with data will assist search program 50 in executing its first search against a specific catalog contained in catalog</p>

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Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	'683 Patent, Col. 8:33-Col. 9:8	<p>database 36.</p> <p>Once the user has built or partially built Requisition Item Table 46 by filling the line numbers (entries) on Requisition Management data screen 110 and selecting those lines to be searched, he or she is now ready to initiate electronic sourcing system 5. Pressing the F11 function key, which is labelled "Catalog," from Requisition Management screen 110 accesses electronic sourcing system 5.</p> <p>Referring now to FIG. 2, after the user presses the F11 key on Requisition Management data screen 110 of Fisher RIMS system 40, Fisher RIMS system 40 will pass program control via XCTL 74 to ESRC program 70. XCTL 74 is a protocol within CICS application 34 that directs the execution of a program, as would readily be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. As control is passed from REQI program 44A to ESRC program 70, ESRC-Comm-AREA data structure 76 is passed. ESRC-Comm-AREA is a layout of storage area in local computer 20 created by REQI program 44A to pass data to ESRC program 70, as would readily be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art.</p> <p>ESRC program 70 will then LINK 82 to ESCP program 80 with ESCP-Comm-AREA 84. LINK 82 is a protocol within CICS application 32 that directs the execution of a program, as would readily be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. Data at</p>

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>least partially describing one item desired to be requisitioned is passed to ESCP program 80 via LINK 82. Thus, if there are five items to be passed to ESCP program 80, there will be five LINKS 82 made. If no items are to be passed to ESCP program 80, only one LINK 82 is made to ESCP program 80. ESCP program 80 can return up to twenty items per LINK 82; in other words, for each item desired to be requisitioned up to twenty desired catalog items contained in catalog database 36 may be sent to REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management data screen 110 of Fisher RIMS system 40. If a user chooses to terminate the sourcing process, ESRC program 70 would return to REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management data screen 110 without processing any of the records.</p> <p>ESCP program 80 links with Shell 52 and TV/2 search program 50 via DDE LINK 90. Shell 52 and TV/2 search program 50 search in catalog database 36 for the item or items desired to be requisitioned that has or have been passed from ESRC program 70 to ESCP program 80.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 5: 9-18	<p>Host computer 10 and local computer 20 are preferably linked point-to-point or in a network employing the formats and protocols of IBM's System Network Architecture ("SNA"). Host computer 10 can be substantially any mainframe or minicomputer capable of running the desired</p>

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		programs and conducting the required communications. Preferably, host computer 10 is a mainframe computer, such as an IBM Model 3090, running the MVS operating system, the MVS-CICS application and a Virtual Telecommunication Access Method communications network.
	'683 Patent, Col. 17: 26-29	For this purpose, each local computer is connected to host computer 210 via a phone/dataline and either a gateway or a minicomputer acting as a local host.
	'683 Patent, FIG. 1C (link 60)	<p style="text-align: center;">FIG. 1C</p>
	'683 Patent, FIG. 2	<p style="text-align: center;">FIG. 2</p>
(3) querying certain fields of the item	'683 Patent, Col. 9:30-	If the user has marked an item on Requisition

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
data to locate item records in the database matching the search criteria; and	37	Management data screen 110 with the designation "S," the entered data at least partially describing that item will be sent to Shell 52 and TV/2 search program 50A in the manner described above. TV/2 search program 50 will search catalog database 36 for all items that match the search field sent over from REQI program 44A and Requisition Management data screen 110.
	'683 Patent, Col. 9:5-16	Shell 52 and TV/2 search program 50 search in catalog database 36 for the item or items desired to be requisitioned that has or have been passed from ESRC program 70 to ESCP program 80. Catalog database 36 contains the following fields: vendor name, vendor number, vendor part (catalog) number, product description, list price, page number, quantity, unit, catalog text, and catalog images. Shell 52 and TV/2 search program 50 may, if desired, search the keyword field or any other field shown in Appendix VII. However, not all fields may appear on the monitor 22 of local computer 20, although they are stored in memory.
	'683 Patent, Col. 12:4-29	If the user desires to do additional searching in catalog database 36 that is not connected to catalog or other items that have been listed on Requisition Management data screen 110 of Fisher RIMS system 40, he or she can click the box on footer bar of Shell 52 that is labelled "Search." Then, a Search screen comes up on monitor 22 of local computer 20. An exemplary Search screen is shown in Appendix VII. In this screen, the usual footer bar is visible in the

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>background, but is not active.</p> <p>Using the Search screen, a user can search catalog database 36 by page, text description, part number (where the user has the further option to search by Fisher part number, for example if Fisher is to be the desired vendor), Vendor part number, vendor name (for vendors other than Fisher), or bulletin. Stock numbers specific to the customer can also be present in catalog database 36 and searched using the screen of Appendix VII. "Bulletin" refers to an additional vendor publication with detailed product information that may not be included in a vendor catalog. Searching for information contained in bulletins may be done by bulletin number, but only if bulletins have been made a part of catalog database 36. For purposes of this disclosure, bulletins when included in a catalog database are considered a type of catalog.</p> <p>After the user has entered the field to be searched on the Search Screen, the user clicks on the "SEARCH" box near the bottom of the Search Screen. A Hit List 47 indicating all items from catalog database 36 that match the search field that was entered on the Search Screen then is generated.</p>

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	'683 Patent, Col. 6:14-22	A search priority exists when more than one field is provided by requisition/purchasing system 40. The priority is as follows: (1) part (catalog) number; (2) keyword; and (3) page number. The search will start with priority (1) and proceed through priority (3) in sequence until a search produces products matching the search criteria. At that time, the search will return the matching product information to requisition/purchasing system 40 and stop at the highest priority resulting in a match.
(4) outputting items matching the search criteria;	'683 Patent, Col. 9:37-51	When a search is performed in Shell 52 and search program 50, a Hit List 47 is produced, as indicated in FIG. 1C. The user would see on monitor 22 of local computer 20 a Hit List 47 screen representing limited data about all matching catalog items that were located in catalog database 36 as a result of the search. A sample Hit List 47 produced from a search initiated when the entry "OVENS" is received as the description or keyword by search program 50 from Requisition Item Table 46 is shown in Appendix III. Similar Hit Lists 47 are produced when various searches are performed from the Search Input screen shown in Appendix VII. When a Hit List 47 is depicted on monitor 22, the underlying catalog text and pictures (in either partial or complete form) are typically collected in a memory location for rapid viewing, printing or other use.

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching for Matching Items in the Database

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	'683 Patent, Appendix III	<p>APPENDIX III</p> <p>ovens</p> <p>General</p> <p>{1100}Fisher Isotemp 800 Series Programmable Ovens</p> <p>{1107}Isotemp 700 Series Deluxe Lab Ovens</p> <p>{1108}Isotemp 600 Standard Lab Ovens</p> <p>{1109}Fisher Isotemp 500 Series Economy Lab Ovens</p> <p>{1110}Gravity Convection Ovens</p> <p>{1111}Utility Ovens</p> <p>{1112}Mechanical Convection Ovens with Electronic Temperature</p> <p>{1113}General-Purpose Ovens</p> <p>{1114}Heavy Duty Deluxe Ovens</p> <p>{1115}Large Capacity Model 2802A</p> <p>{1117}Standard Capacity Model 281A</p> <p>{1118}Fisher Models 281 and 285 Vacuum Ovens</p> <p>{1119}NAPCO Vacuum Ovens</p> <p>Help Catalogs Search Order List Minimize Clear Prev Next Exit</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 12:26-30	After the user has entered the field to be searched on the Search Screen, the user clicks on the "SEARCH" box near the bottom of the Search Screen. A Hit List 47 indicating all items from catalog database 36 that match the search field that was entered on the Search Screen then is generated.
	'683 Patent, FIG. 1C	<p>FIG. 1C</p>
and structural equivalents thereof.		

Claim 6, Element B: Means For Searching For Matching Items In The Database

This claim element is similar to Element C of Claim 3 of the '683 Patent except that the search is conducted "in the database" rather than "among the selected product catalogs." Thus, the algorithm corresponding to this claim element is similar to the algorithm associated with Element C of Claim 3. The algorithm is again a four-step algorithm which includes the steps of:

(1) receiving search criteria (*e.g.*, catalog number, part number, partial textual description) relating to item(s) to be searched; (2) communicating the search criteria to a search engine module; (3) querying certain fields of the item data to locate item records in the database matching the search criteria; and (4) outputting items matching the search criteria; and structural equivalents thereof.

The distinction between this algorithm and that associated with Element C of Claim 3 lies in step 3. The item records are located "in the database" rather than "in the selected product catalogs" because of the distinction in the claim language. Otherwise, the same reasoning applies as that discussed above with respect to Element C of Claim 3.

Further, for the reasons discussed above with respect to Element C of Claim 3, the algorithm associated with Element B of Claim 6 does not include a step of "searching local RIMS databases (42) based on search criteria, and if found, search is complete." As discussed above, the search engine module never searches the RIMS databases.

In addition, for the reasons discussed above with respect to Element C of Claim 3, the algorithm associated with this claim element does not include a step of "concatenating (*i.e.*, joining together by linking so as to form a chain or series) only selected product catalogs to be searched after the user selects the catalogs to be searched." Moreover, a "concatenating ... selected product catalogs" step is inconsistent with the language of Element B of Claim 6 which only requires that the "means for searching" search "for matching items in the database." There

is no prior selection of one or more product catalogs required to satisfy claim 6. There is no need for a concatenation step in such circumstance. Weaver Dec., ¶ 69.

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)¹

Function: building a requisition using data relating to selected matching items and their associated source(s).

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
a computer which is programmed with special-purpose software modules including a requisition module to execute an algorithm which includes the steps of:		
(1) transferring the data relating to selected item(s) from hit list(s) that were returned from the search(es) to a requisition module; and	'683 Patent, Col. 12:48-Col. 13:62	<p>Once the user has completely built the Order List 48 within Shell 52 and TV/2 search program 50, he or she can transmit it to Fisher RIMS system 40. This is accomplished by clicking on the "Order" box at the bottom of the Items Selected screen to communicate the completed Order List 48 to Fisher RIMS system 40.</p> <p>The user may have selected no items, one item or several items from the catalogs contained in catalog database 36 by using TV/2 search program 50. If no items have been selected, the original items that were entered on Requisition Item Table 46 of Requisition Management data screen 110 will remain on that screen and will continue to be</p>

¹ This claim element is also found in Claim 3 of the '683 Patent, Element D.

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>processed by Fisher RIMS system 40. If one or several desired catalog items were selected in TV/2 search program 50, the first item selected will replace the original item on Requisition Item Table 46 of Requisition Management data screen 110. Additional items that were selected from the search that was performed in TV/2 search program 50 will be added to Requisition Item Table 46 of Requisition Management data screen 110.</p> <p>Interface programs ESCP 80 and ESRC 70 (FIG. 2) are used to send data to REQI program 44A (FIG. 1A) and its associated Requisition Management data screen 110 (FIG. 2) about the items that were selected from the search performed by TV/2 search program 50. To the user, it appears that all the items selected from the search are sent over to Fisher RIMS system 40 at the same time. However, ESCP program 80 receives multiple items from TV/2 search program 50, and then sends one item at a time to ESRC program 70. ESRC program 70 then waits until all items have been passed to it before sending data about the items to REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management screen 110 of Fisher RIMS system 40. The information transmitted to Requisition Management screen 110 from the Order List built in TV/2 search program 50 and sent through ESCP program 80 and ESRC program 70 includes vendor name, vendor number, vendor part (catalog) number, product description, list price,</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>page number, quantity, unit and catalog text. However, not all of the above-listed fields may be displayed on screen at all times. ESRC program 70 passes control back to Fisher RIMS system 40 via XCTL 78. The requisition number, customer identification and release number (or other data identifying the requisition) will be passed in MENU-Comm-AREA 56 to confirm that the returned data are associated with the proper requisition. MENU-Comm-AREA 56 is a layout of storage area within local computer 20, as one of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand.</p> <p>As previously indicated, multiple LINKS 82 may have been created between program ESRC 70 and program ESCP 80 if multiple lines were selected (with the "S" symbol) in Requisition Management data screen 110. After completing the first search, and any additional searches initiated with the footer bar, an order list is created and returned to Requisition Item Data Table 46 associated with Requisition Management data screen 110. At this point, the next item is sent from a LINK 82 through program ESCP 80 and DDE LINK 90 to the TV/2 program 50, and a hit list resulting from the corresponding search is displayed on monitor 22. The process of searching, displaying, selecting and ordering is repeated until all of items stored by LINKS 82 have been sent to TV/2 program 50 and searched. At the end of each of these searches, an</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>order list may be created and returned to Requisition Item Data Table 46 or cancelled. Once the last item is completed, ESRC program 70 passes control via XCTL 78, and a Requisition Management screen 110 is displayed, reflecting all of the additions and changes that have been made to the Requisition Item Data Table 46 associated with that requisition.</p> <p>A limit is normally placed on the number of items of an order that may be returned to the Requisition Item Data Table 46. For example, if the maximum size in Requisition Item Data Table 46 is set at 200 lines, one could create a limit on the size of each order list at 20, 50, 100 or even 200. A corresponding limit can be placed on the number of LINKS 82 that can be established concurrently from the same requisition. Setting a limit of five LINKS 82 and forty items per order list would be one way of avoiding situations in which a Requisition Item Data Table 46 reaches its limit (e.g., 200 lines) before all of the searches (five) have been completed and order lists (five of forty items each) have been returned.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 7: 39-44.	As described herein, however, limited fields on specific items can be transmitted from Requisition Item Table 46 to search program 50, and more completed fields of the same or different items can be received from the search program 50 into a Requisition Item Table 46.
	'683 Patent, Col. 10: 21-43	Once Hit List 47 has been created by TV/2 search program 50, the user can view it and select particular

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>ones of the located catalog items for Order List 48 that is being created in Shell 52, as shown in FIG. 1C. For example, a search for "Eco RI," a restriction enzyme, may have uncovered five entries in the Promega catalog (identified by Promega catalog numbers R6011, R6012, R6013, R6015 and R401) and five entries in the Fisher catalog (identified by Fisher catalog numbers PRR6011, PRR6012, PRR6013, PRR6015 and PRR4014). If the user selected PRR6012 from the Fisher catalog, Fisher catalog number PRR6012 would be added as an entry to the Items Selected screen, with VN00000001 (identifying the vendor as distributor Fisher) accompanying it in the Order List 48. If the user instead selected the item identified by catalog number R6012 from the Promega catalog, then Promega catalog number R6012 would be added as an entry to the Items Selected screen, with VN00005860 (identifying the vendor as Promega) accompanying it in the Order List. In either case, the information transmitted to REQI program 44A of Fisher RIMS system 40 would also include description, list price and other information taken from the catalog database from which the selection was made.</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	'683 Patent, FIG. 1A	<p>FIG. 1A</p>
	'683 Patent, FIG. 1B	<p>FIG. 1B</p>
	'683 Patent, FIG. 1C	<p>FIG. 1C</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

<p>Corresponding structure:</p>	<p>Specification Support:</p> <p>'683 Patent, FIG. 2</p>	<p>Text from Patent:</p>
<p>(2) building a requisition using data from the selected matching items to populate certain fields on the requisition form;</p>	<p>'683 Patent, Col. 13: 63-Col. 14:4</p>	<p>At this point in the use of Fisher RIMS system 40, as many entries (lines) of Requisition Management data screen 110 have been built up (some through use of electronic sourcing system 5) as are necessary to complete the requisition. A sample of such a Requisition Management data screen 110, in which four lines have been entered identifying desired items to be requisitioned (including catalog items located as a result of a catalogs search), is shown in Appendix VIII.</p>
	<p>'683 Patent, Appendix I</p>	

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Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

	Corresponding structure:	Specification Support: '683 Patent, FIG. 1A (elements 42A, 42C, 44C, 44E, 44A, 44D)	Text from Patent:
			FIG. 1A
		'683 Patent, FIG. 1B (elements 260, 240, 242)	FIG. 1B
		'683 Patent, FIG. 1C	FIG. 1C

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	'683 Patent, FIG. 2	<p>The diagram shows a central 'Requisition Management' block (40) connected to several other components. It receives input from 'ESIV' (112) via 'XCTL' (111). The 'Requisition Management' block contains sub-components: 'ESRC-Comm-AREA' (76), 'MENU-Comm-Area' (78), and 'ESRC' (74). Below it is 'ESRG-Comm-Area' (84). Further down are 'ESCP' (82), 'DOE' (80), and 'TNZ' (90). A 'Catalog Database' (36) is connected to the bottom right. Various interconnection lines are labeled with numbers like 110, 113, 76, 78, 74, 82, 80, 90, 52, 50, and 36.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FIG.2</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 1:1-35	<p>There are a number of known requisition/purchasing systems that manage and process requisitions and purchase orders. One such system is the Fisher Scientific Requisition and Inventory Management System ("Fisher RIMS"), described U.S. Pat. No. 5,712,989, filed Apr. 2, 1993 and assigned to Fisher Scientific Company of Pittsburgh, Pa., the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. As its title suggests, Fisher RIMS can also manage inventory. In the Fisher RIMS system, requisition records are created from a real-time interaction between a host computer (generally a mainframe) and a local computer (generally at a customer site), with each computer using data from its own respective database of inventory in conjunction with information entered by a customer service representative operating the local computer. By accessing its respective database, each computer can build and transmit to the other computer communications blocks of data relating to a</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		particular requisition of an item in inventory (or to the management of the inventory itself). The other computer can then use the received data to continue processing of the requisition. Thus, requisition records are created from a real-time interaction between the host and local computers, with each computer using data from its respective database in conjunction with information entered by a customer service representative operating the local computer.
	'683 Patent, Col. 4:1-3	Electronic sourcing system 5 also includes a requisition/purchasing system 40, preferably but not necessarily the Fisher RIMS system,
	'683 Patent, Col. 4: 10-24	<p>Fisher RIMS system 40 is comprised of numerous program modules, including several programs 44, which operate within CICS environment 34 of OS/2 operating system 32. Programs 44 include, among others, Requisition Management ("REQUI") program 44A, Inventory Sourcing program or programs 44B, Requisition Maintenance program 44C, Customer Variable program 44D, and Order Header program 44E, each of which will later be described in greater detail. REQUI program 44A is most often the RIMS program 44 that interfaces with TV/2 search program 50.</p> <p>Fisher RIMS system 40 also includes several Fisher RIMS databases 42. These databases 42 preferably include requisition databases 42A, inventory databases 42B, and customer-specific databases 42C, each maintained within OS/2 operating system 32.</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	'683 Patent, Col. 6: 39-Col. 7:35	<p>Preferably, a user will start the electronic sourcing system 5 from Fisher RIMS system 40. Requisitioning on Fisher RIMS system 40 in context of the electronic sourcing system 5 of the present invention is illustrated in pertinent part in FIG. 3 (and is fully described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,712,989. As data (e.g., Account Number, Requisition Number and Stock Numbers) associated with a single requisition are entered through the various data screens on local computer 20, that computer creates a set of Requisition Tables (including a Requisition Item Table 46, shown in FIG. 1C) for that particular requisition. The Requisition Tables are stored in Requisition databases 42A (shown in FIG. 1A), and can be accessed by local computer 20 using the Requisition Number to find the desired table.</p> <p>The first step in creating a requisition in Fisher RIMS system 40 involves entry by the user of information in the Order Header program 44D (shown in FIG. 1A), which has an associated Order Header data screen 100 (FIG. 3). A sample of an actual Order Header data screen 100 is set forth in Appendix I. The user enters an Account Number, which generally causes the correct name and address associated with that Account Number to be entered into the appropriate fields of Order Header data screen 100. The user must also enter a Requisition Number in the appropriate field of the Order Header screen 100. Various additional information may also</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>be entered.</p> <p>At the bottom of Order Header data screen 100 are several fields that describe the function of various function keys. Function keys F6, F9, and F10 all cause the system to jump to a new RIMS program 44 or data screen in Fisher RIMS system 40. For example, pressing the F9 key causes the system to jump to RIMS Customer Variable program 44E (FIG. 1A) and its associated Customer Variable Header data screen 104 (FIG. 3). Customer Variable Header program 44E with its associated Customer Variable Header data screen 104 allows the user to enter and edit information that the particular customer desires to be associated with the requisition due to requirements of the customer's internal accounting system or other systems. Pressing the F10 key will cause the system to enter the Inventory Sourcing program or programs 44B.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 7: 14-35	<p>Pressing the F6 function key from the Order Header data screen causes Fisher RIMS system 40 to jump to REQI program 44A (FIG. 1A). The screen associated with REQI program 44A is Requisition Management data screen 110 (FIG. 3) illustrated in Appendix II. Within REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management data screen 110, Requisition Item Table 46 (shown in FIG. 1C) is a graphical representation of a database table in which certain fields are completed on a list of items that are to be listed, sourced and ordered. Representative</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>Requisition Management data screens 110 showing a Requisition on Requisition Item Table 46 are set forth in Appendices II, VIII and IX. It should be appreciated that data about each item is stored in Requisition Item Table 46, some of which is displayed on the screens shown in Appendices II, VIII and IX. The data stored can additionally include customer variable data. That is, the fields on Requisition Item Table 46 can be expanded to include specific item details used by a particular customer, especially when reports from requisition databases are transferred to the customer's host computer (not shown). The field structure for these data is maintained in customer-specific databases 42C.</p>
	<p>'683 Patent, Col. 7: 45-60</p>	<p>At the bottom of Requisition Management data screen 110 (FIG. 3), and Appendices II, VIII and IX) are several fields which describe the function of various function keys (F1, F2, etc.). The user uses REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management data screen 110 to enter the catalog or part numbers and quantities of the various items being requisitioned.</p> <p>The Account Number and Requisition Number are automatically passed to REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management data screen 110, and displayed at the top of the Requisition Management data screen 110 in the relevant fields. For example, in the exemplary Requisition</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		Management data screen 110 shown in Appendix II, the number 218848 has been entered in the Account Number field, and the notation "TEST NEW ONE" has been entered in the Requisition Number field.
	'683 Patent, Col. 16:66- Col. 17:28	<p>As shown in FIG. 1B, the present invention also has application to Distributor's regional customer service locations where a large number of CSRs may be placing orders directly on Distributor's host computer 210 for thousands of different customers who call in. In that environment, search program 250, which preferably comprises TV/2 search program 250, and catalog databases 236 are stored on file server 200. In this environment, file server 200 is a large personal computer, a work station or a mini-computer such as an IBM AS/400.</p> <p>Alternatively, the server 200 and a minicomputer (such as an IBM AS/400) can be independently connected to each local computer 200. Each CSR has a local personal computer 220 having a monitor 222, a keyboard 224 and a printer 226. Local computer 220 is provided with programs including requisition/purchasing program 240, Shell program 252 and a graphic user interface 254 (preferably EASEL Workbench program 254 for OS/2) for listing items. One or more of these may be copied from server 220 when needed. Work-in-progress requisitions 260 are established for each customer and are attached to graphic user interface 254. Server 200 maintains complete requisitions 242, in a manner similar to the manner in which local</p>

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>computer 20 maintains requisition databases 42 in the embodiment shown in FIG. 1A.</p> <p>Normally, in such an environment, the CSR creates Order lists for customers by entering Distributor catalog numbers into graphic user interface 254 and connecting to the Distributor mainframe 210 for price and availability. For this purpose, each local computer is connected to host computer 210 via a phone/dataline and either a gateway or a minicomputer acting as a local host.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 17: 39-43	The resultant lists of products are then transferred by Shell program 252 to a work-in-progress requisition 260, and then entered from graphical user interface 254 directly onto Distributor's mainframe computer 210 as orders from the applicable customer to Distributor.
	'683 Patent, Col. 17: 48-52	In this regional environment, file server 200 or the minicomputer acting as local host can maintain files of completed requisitions 242 which can be subsequently used for generating reports for customers in the region.
	'683 Patent, Col. 18: 42- Col. 19:6	The operating environment (regional CSR site, on-site CSR, on-site CSR networked with Customer end users and with purchaser personnel or Distributor purchasing site) will also affect the catalog databases 236 included, file server 200 size and requisition/purchasing program 240 used. In some situations (e.g., purchasing) each client computer has an independent copy of requisition/purchasing

Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building a Requisition Using Data Relating to Selected Matching Items and Their Associated Source(s)

Corresponding structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>program 240; in others (e.g., on-site CSR) a single copy of the requisition/purchasing program 240 is maintained with associated local databases on the server 200. Where the requisition/purchasing program 240 and local databases are maintained on file server 200, the local database is updated after each use for the benefit of subsequent users. For example, in an environment using Fisher RIMS for requisition/purchasing program 240, if a NIST standard is selected using TV-2 search program 250 and ordered using Fisher RIMS 240 (as either a type 07 purchase from Distributer or a type 05 administrative purchase from NIST), that item is available in the applicable database for subsequent requisitions. For example, a NIST standard ordered as a type 05 item will be stored in the local database on file server 200, with NIST as the vendor for subsequent administrative purchases by Customer. A NIST standard ordered from Distributor as a type 07 item will be stored in Distributor's host databases as a type 07 available to Distributor from NIST. The local databases on file server 200 will also contain records of all items requisitioned and ordered, useful to transfer files to a Customer's computer (e.g., of purchase orders placed by that Customer in a day) or to generate reports for a Customer (e.g., or requisitions placed by each Customer department and/or budget number in a week).</p>
and structural equivalents thereof.		

**Claim 6, Element C: Means For Building A Requisition Using Data Relating To
Selected Matching Items And Their Associated Source(s)¹**

See the discussion above for Claim 3, Element D.

¹ This claim element is also found in Claim 3, Element D of the '683 Patent.

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing the Requisition to Generate One or More Purchase Orders for the Selected Matching Items¹

Function: processing the requisition to generate one or more purchase orders for the selected matching items

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
a computer which is programmed with special-purpose software modules including a purchasing module to execute an algorithm which includes the steps of:		
(1) accepting the requisition;	'683 Patent, Col. 15: 20-21	Once a requisition has been inventory sourced and accepted by the CSR,
and (2) generating one or more purchase orders based on the data included in the requisition relating to the matching items returned from searching selected product catalogs and based on predetermined rules relating to the user's preference (e.g., one purchase order to each distinct supplier referenced in the requisition);	'683 Patent, Col. 15:20-59	Once a requisition has been inventory sourced and accepted by the CSR, it can be converted to one or more purchase orders, as represented by step 114 in FIG. 3. For example, the requisition represented by the Requisition Item Table 46 of Appendix IX, if accepted without further revision by pressing function key F6 ("ACCEPT"), would result in the generation of the following three purchase orders: A. Line 002 would be ordered from on-site distributor-owned inventory; B. Line 004 would be ordered from on-site customer-owned

¹ This claim element is also found in Claim 3 of the '683 Patent, Element E.

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing the Requisition to Generate One or More Purchase Orders for the Selected Matching Items

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>inventory (a transfer internal to the customer); and</p> <p>C. Lines 001 and 003 would be ordered, respectively, from Distributor's "DEL and "EDC" warehouses.</p> <p>Of these three purchase orders, Orders A (type "01") and C (type "03") are shared between host computer 10 and local computer 20 (as shown in FIG. 3). Upon execution of Order A, the inventory records on both computers for Distributor-owned JIT inventory are adjusted synchronously. A purchase order is generated by host computer 10 immediately thereafter. Order B (type "06") is executed and stored only on local computer 20. Upon execution of Order B, the inventory record on local computer 20 is adjusted (the host computer contains no records on Customer-owned JIT inventory or on items ordered by Administrative Purchases). For Administrative Purchases (type 05 items), a purchase order is printed, and mailed or faxed, locally by computer 20 as indicated at step 118 in FIG. 3, or via host computer 10 via EDI (if EDI was selected in the Header of Appendix I and an EDI transfer arrangement existed with vendor).</p> <p>It is an important feature of the present invention that a requisition may be filled by searching and selecting from a catalog database of items, inventory sourced, and the resulting requisition then divided into one or more purchase orders. This contrasts with known prior art CD-ROM catalog orders. This contrasts with known prior art CD-ROM catalog systems in which only a single purchase order to a single supplier is built without reference to inventory</p>

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing the Requisition to Generate One or More Purchase Orders for the Selected Matching Items

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		records, and in which the information used to create the purchase order is limited to that contained in the product catalog of a single vendor.
	'683 Patent, Col. 10:52-64	<p>A purchase order then would be generated for this corresponding Distributor item as further described below.</p> <p>By contrast, an item selected from the Fairmont catalog would be transferred to Fisher RIMS system 40 with the vendor number for Fairmont, and would be recognized during inventory sourcing as either a type 07 product (that Distributor orders from Fairmont) or as a type 05 item (that Customer orders from Fairmont as an Administrative Purchase). In either of these two cases, a purchase order would be generated for an item, corresponding to a desired catalog item, that is identified by the same Fairmont catalog number that was requisitioned.</p>
	'683 Patent Col. 18:18-29	<p>Once responses from either or both have been obtained, the Distributor purchasing employee can use the item list in EASEL interface 254 to create one or more of the following purchase orders:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. an order from the customer to the supplier (an Administrative Purchase); 2. an order from the customer to Distributor (for a type 07 product); and 3. an order from the Distributor to the supplier

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing the Requisition to Generate One or More Purchase Orders for the Selected Matching Items

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:																																																																																	
		(usually providing for direct shipment from the supplier to the customer or to a JIT site maintained by Distributor for the customer).																																																																																	
	'683 Patent, Col. 17: 44-48	The CSR, knowing which items are available from which Distributor warehouse and direct-shipping supplier, then may divide the customer's requested items into multiple orders, so as to assure that each order is completely filled by a single shipment.																																																																																	
	'683 Patent, Appendix IX	<div>APPENDIX IX</div> <div>RICPOMPI FISHER SCIENTIFIC RIMS DATE: 08-03-94 REQUISITION MANAGEMENT SCREEN TIME: 07:44:13 COMPID: 001 REQ-NBR: PO NBR.001 ACCT-NBR: 365690 006 REL-NBR: 0 ORDER NBR: 0000000000 PICKLIST REVIEWED: 0 SERVICE: 0.00 ORDER: 0.00 FREIGHT: 0 CARRIER: 0</div> <table><thead><tr><th>Q LINE</th><th>PART</th><th>QTY</th><th>UOM</th><th>PRD</th><th>UNIT PRICE</th><th>SERVICE</th><th>ENT PRICE</th><th>LOC.</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>001A131</td><td>STAT</td><td></td><td>EA</td><td>00</td><td>35.50</td><td>0.00</td><td>35.50</td><td>DEL S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>ACETONE CERTIFIED ACS</td><td>1L</td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>QTY REC: 0</td></tr><tr><td>00203405</td><td>7K 01</td><td></td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td>32.70</td><td>0.00</td><td></td><td>32.70 JIT S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>SEASER GRIFIN 250 ML</td><td>11.9</td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td>49</td><td></td><td></td><td>QTY REC: 0</td></tr><tr><td>003 12346151</td><td>EA 02</td><td></td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td>3495.00</td><td>0.00</td><td>3495.00</td><td>EOC S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>PROGRAMMABLE OVEN</td><td></td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td>0</td><td></td><td></td><td>QTY REC: 0</td></tr><tr><td>004 A181-06</td><td>EA 06</td><td></td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td>100.00</td><td>0.00</td><td>100.00</td><td>1n' S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>ACETONE</td><td></td><td>QTY AVAIL:</td><td></td><td>0</td><td></td><td></td><td>QTY REC: 0</td></tr></tbody></table> <div>RESPONSE: KEY(S): F3 EXIT F5ACCEPT F7BKWD F9 FWD F# PRINT ACK F11MS ERROR# F12 DELETE IS V123</div>	Q LINE	PART	QTY	UOM	PRD	UNIT PRICE	SERVICE	ENT PRICE	LOC.	001A131	STAT		EA	00	35.50	0.00	35.50	DEL S		ACETONE CERTIFIED ACS	1L	QTY AVAIL:					QTY REC: 0	00203405	7K 01		QTY AVAIL:		32.70	0.00		32.70 JIT S		SEASER GRIFIN 250 ML	11.9	QTY AVAIL:		49			QTY REC: 0	003 12346151	EA 02		QTY AVAIL:		3495.00	0.00	3495.00	EOC S		PROGRAMMABLE OVEN		QTY AVAIL:		0			QTY REC: 0	004 A181-06	EA 06		QTY AVAIL:		100.00	0.00	100.00	1n' S		ACETONE		QTY AVAIL:		0			QTY REC: 0
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	'683 Patent, FIG. 3	<p>FIG. 3</p>																																																																																	
	'683 Patent, Col. 1:10-35	There are a number of known requisition/purchasing systems that manage and process requisitions and purchase orders. One such system is the Fisher Scientific Requisition and Inventory Management																																																																																	

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing the Requisition to Generate One or More Purchase Orders for the Selected Matching Items

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>System ("Fisher RIMS"), described U.S. Pat. No. 5,712,989, filed Apr. 2, 1993 and assigned to Fisher Scientific Company of Pittsburgh, Pa., the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. As its title suggests, Fisher RIMS can also manage inventory. In the Fisher RIMS system, requisition records are created from a real-time interaction between a host computer (generally a mainframe) and a local computer (generally at a customer site), with each computer using data from its own respective database of inventory in conjunction with information entered by a customer service representative operating the local computer. By accessing its respective database, each computer can build and transmit to the other computer communications blocks of data relating to a particular requisition of an item in inventory (or to the management of the inventory itself). The other computer can then use the received data to continue processing of the requisition. Thus, requisition records are created from a real-time interaction between the host and local computers, with each computer using data from its respective database in conjunction with information entered by a customer service representative operating the local computer.</p>
	'683 Patent, Col. 14:46-65	<p>For example, as shown in Appendix IX, product type "01" for the item on line 002 indicates that the requested requisition item is available as Distributor-owned inventory in the JIT inventory that the vendor/distributor maintains near local computer 20,</p>

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing the Requisition to Generate One or More Purchase Orders for the Selected Matching Items

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>either for the particular Customer or for a group of customers. Product type "06" for the item on line 004 indicates that this item is available for the requisitioner employed by the Customer from inventory owned by Customer's purchasing department but managed by local computer 20. Product type "03" for the items on lines 001 and 003 indicates that these are regular Distributor items that the communication between Distributor's host computer 10 and local computer 20 determined were available in sufficient quantity at one or another of Distributor's general warehouses designated "DEL" and "EDC" in the location ("LOC") field. Product type "05" (not shown in Appendix IX) indicates that a requisitioned item is to be purchased by Customer directly from an outside supplier, using an Administrative Purchase Order that local computer 20 creates and prints (or transmits) for Customer.</p>
and structural equivalents thereof.		

Claim 6, Element D: Means For Processing The Requisition To Generate One Or More Purchase Orders For The Selected Matching Items¹

See the discussion above for Claim 3, Element E.

¹ This claim element is also found in Claim 3, Element E of the '683 Patent.

Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different Source¹

Function: converting data relating to a selected matching item and an associated source to data relating to an item and a different source

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
a computer which is programmed with special-purpose software modules to execute an algorithm which includes the steps of:		
(1) maintaining a cross-reference table or file identifying cross-referenced items, identical items or generally equivalent items and one or more codes corresponding to cross-referenced items, identical items or generally equivalent items;	'683 Patent, Col. 4:60-Col. 5:8	Where the Fisher RIMS system is in use with electronic sourcing system 5, a host computer 10 located at a Distributor site is also provided, as shown in FIG. 1A. Host computer 10 controls all inventory, pricing and requisitioning operations of the Distributor's regularly stocked items using host pricing and inventory databases 11. Host pricing and inventory databases 11 may include such information as: descriptions of the items and the quantities thereof available at a particular Distributor warehouse and at other Distributor warehouses; item records for each Product regularly sold by the Distributor; discount records by Customer; and cross-references from the Distributor's catalog number to its corresponding vendor's part (catalog) number and to similar corresponding catalog numbers of other vendors (suppliers or distributors) for the same Product.

¹ This claim element is also found in Claim 3 of the '683 Patent, Element F.

**Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item
and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different
Source**

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
<p>(2) for a selected matching item, accessing the cross-reference table or file to identify an identical item or generally equivalent item cross-referenced to the selected matching item and associated with a different source; and</p>	<p>'683 Patent, Col. 14:4- Col. 15:9</p>	<p>The next step is that of inventory sourcing using RIMS inventory sourcing program or programs 44B in Fisher RIMS system 40, as shown in FIG. 3. Inventory sourcing is the process of determining what inventory will be used to fill the requisition. Pricing is also performed in this step when it is called for. Inventory sourcing in Fisher RIMS system 40 is performed on both local computer 20 and host computer 10.</p> <p>Within Fisher RIMS system 40, a Requisition Item Table 46, as shown in Appendix VIII (similar to that shown in Appendix II, but including more items), can be inventory sourced by pressing the key F6 from REQI program 44A represented by Requisition Management data screen 110 shown in Appendix VIII (and in Appendix II). Since inventory records on JIT items (type 01 and 06) are maintained in inventory database 42B, lines 002 and 004 in Appendix VIII show the availability of these items in inventory (49 items available for line 002, and 0 items available for line 004). After the F6 key has been pressed, host computer 10 searches its host pricing and inventory databases for availability of the various items listed on Requisition Management data screen 110 in different inventory locations (e.g., different warehouses) as described in further detail, below.</p> <p>After such inventory sourcing, and assuming that no errors occurred during sourcing (as indicated by decision step 116 in FIG. 3), the contract price, source (inventory) location and available quantity or other fields are communicated back to</p>

Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different Source

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>computer 20 by host computer 10, and entered and displayed in the Requisition Management Screen. This can best be seen by comparing lines 001 and 003 of Appendix VIII to Appendix IX, especially as to "QTY AVAIL" (quantity available), "LOC" (inventory location) and price. As Appendix IX indicates, an inventory-sourced Requisition Item Table 46 typically contains the same items, but with more completed fields (including price, product type and inventory location). Moreover, as discussed above, an entry in an inventory-sourced Requisition Management screen may indicate for a requisitioned item a vendor and vendor catalog number that has been changed, from what was obtained from a catalog search, to a corresponding vendor and vendor catalog number for that item from another source (e.g., Fisher--which has its own catalog number for that manufacturer's item that Fisher distributes).</p> <p>For example, as shown in Appendix IX, product type "01" for the item on line 002 indicates that the requested requisition item is available as Distributor-owned inventory in the JIT inventory that the vendor/distributor maintains near local computer 20, either for the particular Customer or for a group of customers. Product type "06" for the item on line 004 indicates that this item is available for the requisitioner employed by the Customer from inventory owned by Customer's purchasing department but managed by local computer 20. Product type "03" for the items on lines 001 and 003 indicates that these are regular Distributor items that the communication between Distributor's host</p>

Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different Source

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>computer 10 and local computer 20 determined were available in sufficient quantity at one or another of Distributor's general warehouses designated "DEL" and "EDC" in the location ("LOC") field. Product type "05" (not shown in Appendix IX) indicates that a requisitioned item is to be purchased by Customer directly from an outside supplier, using an Administrative Purchase Order that local computer 20 creates and prints (or transmits) for Customer.</p> <p>The inventory sourcing process described above also determines the net prices shown in Appendix IX for each item. Type 01 and type 03 items are priced by Distributor's host computer 10 searching host databases 11, which contain various formulae and tables of Distributor's pricing agreement with the Customer. Host computer 10 also prices any type 04 or type 07 item, if present. These prices were transmitted to local computer 20 along with the location and availability information for the type 01 items. Prices for type 05 and 06 items are maintained in the local computer's 20 own databases 42B and 42C.</p>
(3) replacing the selected matching item and its associated source with the identical item or generally equivalent item and its different source in a requisition;	'683 Patent, Col. 15: 60- Col. 16:32	Electronic sourcing system 5 also contains the capability to log messages returned from inventory sourcing program or programs 44B of Fisher RIMS system 40. Messages will be logged for any of the following reasons: (1) part number changes for line sent to ESCP program 80; (2) list price from inventory sourcing program 44B differs from list price returned from ESCP program 80; (3) vendor name from inventory sourcing program 44B differs

Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different Source

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		<p>from vendor name returned from ESCP program 80; (4) on a "master or blanket" order, in which local computer 20 tracks the amount of purchases against a blanket or cumulative sum available and/or in which there is limited access to products or limited access to certain users, the part has already been entered on another line; and (5) the maximum number of line items has been reached.</p> <p>Referring again to FIG. 2, a user is able to view the messages returned by pressing the ALT F11 function keys in REQI program 44A and its associated Requisition Management screen 110 in Fisher RIMS system 40. After the ALT F11 keys have been pressed, REQI program 44A will link to ESMV program 112 via XCTL link 111 for displaying the message log created. ESMV program 112 is a function of Fisher RIMS system 40. ESMV program 112 allows the user to page through the messages created and then to return to Requisition Management screen 110. A sample ESMV message screen 81 associated with ESMV program 112 is shown in Appendix X.</p> <p>The first two messages of the message screen of Appendix X indicate that a part number for line 001, identified as part number 53610, was successfully added in substitution for a prior part originally entered as part number S100-06 (from the Fisher</p>

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Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different Source

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
	683 Patent, Appendix IX	<div>APPENDIX IX</div> <div>RICPOMPI FISHER SCIENTIFIC RIMS DATE: 05-03-24 REQUISITION MANAGEMENT SCREEN TIME: 07:44:15 COMP ID: 001 REQ-NBR: PO NBR 001 ACCT NBR: 501000 006 REL-NBR: ORDER NBR: PICKLIST REVIEWED: SERVICE: 0.00 ORDER: 0.00 FREIGHT: CARRIER: O LINE PART QTY UOM PRD UNIT PRICE SERVICE ENT PRICE LOC- STAT 001A181 EA 00 15.50 0.00 33.50 DEL 5 ACETONE CERTIFIED ACS IL QTY AVAIL: 2 QTY REC: 0 0020240N PK 01 12.70 0.00 32.70 JIT 5 BEASER GRIFFIN 250 ML 1249 QTY AVAIL: 49 QTY REC: 0 003 123460181 EA 00 7495.00 0.00 1499.00 EOC 5 PROGRAMMABLE OVEN EA 00 QTY AVAIL: 0 QTY REC: 0 004A181-06 EA 00 100.00 0.00 100.00 1n 5 ACETONE EA 00 QTY AVAIL: 0 QTY REC: 0 RESPONSE: KEY(S): + F1:EXIT F2:ACCEPT F3:END F4:PRINT ACK F10:MB ERRORS F12:DELETE IB VI 25</div>
	683 Patent, Appendix X	<div>APPENDIX X</div> <div>*** REQUISITION MANAGEMENT SCREEN ***</div> <div>ACCT NBR: 208848 000 REQ NBR: TEST NEW ONE COMP: 001 REL NBR: ELECTRONIC SOURCING MESSAGES LINE NUMBER 001 PART NUMBER 53630 PART ADDED SUCCESSFULLY LINE NUMBER 001 PART NUMBER 53630 REPLACEMENT WAS MADE FOR PRIOR PART: S100-06 LINE NUMBER 001 PART NUMBER 53610 VENDOR CHANGED FROM: VN00000001 LINE NUMBER 002 PART NUMBER 53620 PART ADDED SUCCESSFULLY LINE NUMBER 003 PART NUMBER 53650 PART ADDED SUCCESSFULLY</div>
	'683 Patent, Col. 10:43-52	When the resultant requisition is sourced, however (as described below), Distributor's mainframe host computer 10 would recognize the entry for the item from vendor Promega's catalog (R6012, 00005860) as corresponding to that same item available from Fisher's catalog (PRR6012, 000000001). The system thus would transmit back the Customer's contract price and availability for corresponding item PRR6012 as a type 03 (regular Distributor) product available from one of distributor's inventory locations. A purchase order then would be generated for this corresponding Distributor item as further

**Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item
and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different
Source**

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		described below.
	'683 Patent, Col. 16:54-62	If, however, the sourced requisition was split into more purchase orders than the Customer purchasing employee might prefer, the intervention of the Distributor CSR could be invoked to revise and re-source the requisition (causing, for example, certain items originally sourced as type 01 products to be sourced for this order as corresponding type 03 products from a common Distributor warehouse with other type 03 products on the requisition).
	'683 Patent, Col. 17: 29-48	<p>When a customer asks for products by manufacturer part number or a competitor's catalog number, the CSR has access to cross-reference files, as earlier described, either maintained on the local host or maintained on the Distributor host computer 210.</p> <p>Appropriate Distributor catalogs and manufacturer catalogs then are consulted, using TV-2 search program 250 and proper selection of Distributor catalogs and of catalogs and bulletins from manufacturers whose products Distributor regularly sells. Catalogs and bulletins are contained in catalog database 236. The resultant lists of products are then transferred by Shell program 252 to a work-in-progress requisition 260, and then entered from graphical user interface 254 directly onto Distributor's mainframe computer 210 as orders from the applicable customer to Distributor. The CSR, knowing which items are available from which</p>

**Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating to a Selected Matching Item
and an Associated Source to Data Relating to an Item and a Different
Source**

Corresponding Structure:	Specification Support:	Text from Patent:
		Distributor warehouse and direct-shipping supplier, then may divide the customer's requested items into multiple orders, so as to assure that each order is completely filled by a single shipment.
and structural equivalents thereof.		

Claim 6, Element E: Means For Converting Data Relating To A Selected Matching Item And An Associated Source To Data Relating To An Item And A Different Source¹

See the discussion above for Claim 3, Element F.

¹ This claim element is also found in Claim 3, Element F of the '683 Patent.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the 16th day of February, 2010, the foregoing PLAINTIFF *ePLUS INC.*'S SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF ITS CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN MEANS-PLUS-FUNCTION CLAIM ELEMENTS was electronically filed with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/EFC system, which will then send a notification of such filing (NEF) to counsel of record. Copies of the foregoing were also served on the following:

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